



Weather Radio Distribution and Education Project

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Wayne County, Michigan

Wayne County, MI - Located in southeastern Michigan, Wayne County frequently experiences severe weather and tornadoes. In 1997, a dangerous tornado moved through parts of Detroit and the surrounding suburbs of Highland Park and Hamtramck injuring 90 persons. It was the most costly tornado the State had experienced, with damages estimated at \$90 million. The tornado traveled nearly 5 miles and was 2,500 yards wide. The tornado was part of an outbreak of 13 tornadoes in southeastern Michigan, the largest number for a single day since records have been kept.



With over 2 million residents, the County needed effective mitigation measures to adequately warn people of the potentially severe weather. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) provided funds for the County to purchase, distribute and install National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios to every school, hospital, and nursing care facility in the County, for a total of 860 radios.

The County also conducted an all-day tornado shelter/spotter workshop for employees of those facilities. The workshop will enable them, especially in the schools, to plan and prepare for severe weather. The workshop was videotaped and will serve as a training video on tornado spotting for police, fire, and public service personnel in jurisdictions throughout the County. The video will also become part of the in-service training for County personnel and serve as a Statewide training tool in the near future.

The all-day recorded workshop was telecast on the Statewide school internet during the Severe Weather Week in March of 1999. The telecast allows all schools with internet capabilities to watch the video and begin to plan and prepare for severe weather in their school district.

This project will ensure that adequate warning time be more readily available to residents in the County. The benefit of early warnings will be a reduction in both the loss of life and the extent of injuries to persons in an impacted facility.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County (County-wide)**

FEMA Region: **Region V**

State: **Michigan**

County: **Wayne County**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Tornado**
Activity/Project Type: **Education/Outreach/Public Awareness; Warning Systems**
Activity/Project Start Date: **03/1998**
Activity/Project End Date: **10/1998**
Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); Local Sources**
Funding Recipient: **Local Government**
Funding Recipient Name: **Wayne County**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$21,000.00 (Actual)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **Unknown**
Value Tested By Disaster? **No**
Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: **<http://www.tornadoproject.com/>**
Reference URL 2: **<http://www.michigan.gov/>**

Main Points

- Purchased, distributed and installed National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios to every school, hospital, and nursing care facility in the County, for a total of 860 radios.
- Conducted an all-day tornado shelter/spotter workshop for employees of those facilities.
- Telecast the all-day recorded workshop on the Statewide school internet during the Severe Weather Week.